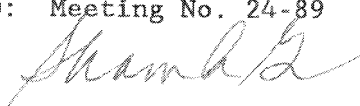


APPROVED: Meeting No. 24-89

ATTEST: 

MAYOR AND COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
Meeting No. 19-89

May 1, 1989

The Mayor and Council of Rockville, Maryland, convened in Worksession in the Council Chamber, Rockville City Hall, Maryland Avenue at Vinson Street, Rockville, Maryland, on Monday, May 1, 1989, at 7:30 p.m.

PRESENT

Mayor Douglas M. Duncan

Councilmember Stephen Abrams (arrived at 7:50 p.m.)

Councilmember James Coyle

Councilmember Viola Hovsepian

Councilmember David Robbins

The Mayor in the Chair.

In attendance: City Manager Bruce Romer, City Clerk Sharon Gran and City Attorney Paul Glasgow.

Re: Delivery of Proposed FY1990
Proposed Operating Budget and
FY1990-95 Proposed Capital
Improvements Program

City Manager Bruce Romer presented the proposed FY1990 Operating Budget and FY1990-95 Capital Improvements Program to the Mayor and Council. In his slide presentation, Mr. Romer noted that the property tax rate would remain at the FY89 level, i.e., \$.83 per \$100 of assessed valuation, which is the lowest tax rate since FY69. Mr. Romer further noted that the proposed budget does not assume use of the Fund Balance for ongoing operations.

While the City's water rate will remain constant from FY89, the sewer rate will be increased by \$.11 in consideration of wastewater treatment costs. The refuse rate will be increased by \$.28 primarily due to the increase in County tipping fees.

Citing a strong economic climate, Mr. Romer stated that property taxes

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represent 57% of the revenue sources (\$14.3 million) for the FY1990 budget and that a healthy fund balance was projected.

Mr. Romer informed the Mayor and Council that the FY1990 proposed budget included a number of enhancements for both Public Works and Recreation and Parks. Among the recommended Public Works enhancements were additional staff and equipment for snow and ice control, leaf collection and street maintenance, improved water system maintenance and extensive recycling effort. The Recreation and Parks enhancements include creation of a Special Events Division, expanded special events and state highway maintenance enhancements.

The Capital Improvements Program includes funding for sidewalk and curb construction, bridge repairs, road landscaping, maintenance and enhancement in public buildings and major park improvements. Three million dollars will be allocated to the CIP from operating funds as a commitment to "pay as you go" financing.

Worksessions with the departments have been scheduled beginning May 10, and public hearings on the FY1990 Operating Budget & FY1990-1995 Capital Improvements Program will be held on May 15 and May 30.

In response to their question regarding distribution of the budget to the citizens, Mr. Romer informed the Mayor and Council that there would be a special mailing to civic associations, members of the City's boards and commissions and other special interest groups. A news release was also being distributed to the media and copies of the budget would be available at the Rockville and Twinbrook libraries.

Re: Drug Forum Briefing

A summary and update on the City's initiative on the drug issues, in particular the joint City and County effort concentrated in the Lincoln Park area, was provided by Don Vandrey, Public Information Officer.

Phil Washburn, Youth Services, briefed the Mayor and Council on the five

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areas of involvement by Youth Services:

1. Community Action Teams. Youth Services has become active in a number of Community Action Teams: Lincoln Park/David Scull & East Rockville; Wootton High School; Mark Twain School; Richard Montgomery High School and Rockville High School.

2. Support groups for students. At least five adolescents who participated in these groups decided to go into in-patient treatment this year for substance abuse problems. These groups have also been an entry point for a number of youth, and often their families, to become involved in counseling services.

3. Parent training. Youth Services recently ran an eight-week parent training course following a nationally recognized program format called STEP/TEEN (Systematic Training for Effective Parenting of Teens).

4. Counseling services. Youth Services is currently dealing with a large number of substance abuse cases.

5. Ancillary programs geared toward prevention. These include Rap groups at Lincoln Park which meet weekly and special recreation activities on weekends.

Councilmember Coyle asked if the STEP teams work with the PTAs and focused on school neighborhoods. Staff responded that the STEP programs are advertised through the PTSAs as well as in Rockville Reports.

In response to Councilmember Robbins' questions as to whether the effective parenting program included a significant substance prevention program and if it was free to participants, staff stated that it is not advertised as a prevention program, and there is a materials fee of \$10 for books.

Mayor Duncan requested a summary in the near future from Mr. Washburn.

Josephine Roberts, Special Services, gave a report on the efforts in the Lincoln Park/David Scull/Maryvale School area, indicating that a full-time specialist was on board to handle an array of services from counseling to eviction assistance.

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She emphasized that they are using the case management approach to look at the total problem and are working closely with the Rockville Housing Authority.

Ms. Roberts further noted that Community Ministries is working with them and that they have also worked with other task forces such as the Montgomery County Community Leadership Task Force and the Council of Government's Drug Task Force in order to build a drug free community.

Capt. Taylor of the Montgomery County Police Department noted that it has been one year since the County joined in the intensive effort with the City. He recognized the Department of Community Services for improving the quality of life and Sandra Crewe, Executive Director of the Housing Authority, for her leadership.

Hundreds of arrests have been made, but a serious drug problem still exists--they must continue to dedicate resources. The installation of a wrought iron fence peripherally around the playground, or at least at the northeast border of Johnny's Grocery and the Church, would mitigate some of the activity. Capt. Taylor reviewed other methods of alleviating drug trafficking, such as issuing trespassing orders to offenders who have violated drug laws and installing better lighting at First Street and Lincoln Terrace to reduce illicit activity after dark. He further recommended the continuation of the satellite center on Moore Drive. Capt. Taylor went on to state that Col. Brooks had expressed his appreciation for the leadership in this joint effort.

Mayor Duncan asked about the urgency of the fencing and lighting requests and was advised that they are needed as quickly as possible.

Mayor Duncan asked the City Manager to prepare a request for an emergency appropriation for the fence and lighting to be introduced at the meeting of May 8.

Chief Terry Treschuk commented that Rockville City Police Department is highly involved in the war against drug abuse and noted the following efforts:

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1. Ongoing sharing of information re use of illegal drugs in the City and Montgomery County.
2. Cooperative work agreements in providing police personnel at the Moore Drive substation.
3. Past and future participation in County Municipal Task Force. The City policy is high involvement; scheduling of strategy meetings with Community Organizations and Resources Exchange.

Officer Potter has been to every school with the "Say No to Drugs" campaign, and Chief Treschuk confirmed that the school-based programs are awareness education.

Councilmember Abrams questioned the prevalence of drug use and abuse, the status of open air markets, particularly in Lincoln Park. Capt. Taylor noted that the situation has improved significantly--that it is no longer on the street to the same extent--not a bazaar atmosphere. In response to Councilmember Abrams' question, Capt. Taylor stated that the arrests for buying are local.

Capt. Ricucci of the Montgomery County Police Department responded to Councilmember Abrams that the average age range of drug offenders is 18-26, that 93% of the drugs are crack cocaine. Capt. Ricucci went on to state that success with the school prevention program has warded off introduction at an earlier age.

Discussion followed as to the use of the charge of trespassing as an enforcement tool. Capt. Taylor stated that a mechanism is already in place and that the City Manager has authority to send letters. Mr. Romer stated that there are policy implications for a public property owner, but that the City Attorney was drafting such a letter.

Mayor Duncan discussed the meeting between Council of Government officials and William Bennett and noted that the federal task force is similar to the local task force.

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Capt. Ricucci discussed information sharing with the federal government and noted that Rockville would be better served by continuing participation in the municipal task force. He advised Mayor Duncan that there would continue to be coordination and that Rockville will benefit from information coming from downtown.

As a result of the crackdown in Route 124 area, Mayor Duncan asked if there would be increased activity in the Lincoln Park and David Scull areas. Capt. Taylor responded that it is not significant yet although there has been some increased activity on North Adams Street.

Sandra Crewe, Executive Director of the Rockville Housing Authority, expressed concern with how the public views their program and stated that only a minority of residents are involved with the drug problem. She noted that they have a strong counseling program as well as a rigorous resident selection policy.

Discussion followed as to eviction regulations and waiver of grievance procedures. Regarding operation clean sweep, Ms. Crewe noted that the photo i.d. may have some benefit and there was a need to reinforce the fencing boundary and provide additional lighting. An educational program offering incentives for children who do well was also recommended.

Rita Rumbaugh, Board of Education staff assigned to the City of Rockville by the Superintendent of Schools, commented on the prevention program. She is serving as a member of the Community Action Team, and noted that they are developing prevention programs in the school cluster. Ms. Rumbaugh introduced three members of the CAT team. Linda Dubrovsky, Maryvale PTA member, commented that they are building self-esteem for children and that they are putting together a candlelight vigil to march through the Lincoln Park area. Melvin Hall, a local resident, indicated that the key to drug prevention is educating the masses; and Julian Mertos, a David Scull resident, asked for reassurances of adequate staffing of police.

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Maxine Counihan, special assistant to the County Executive and the Chair of the Coordinating Council on Substance Abuse, noted that Lincoln Park has set the pace and is a model of empowerment. She espoused the 3 A's--awareness, attitude change, action and, a fourth, get angry, as as a deterrent to substance abuse. She commended the Mayor and Council for their help, noting that muncicipal police services and County Government are all working together and making progress. The County Government is leading the way in a number of areas, i.e., business against drugs, employee assistance program, and a plan used by the unions to teach employees how to confront a co-worker.

Rev. Mansfield Kaseman, Community Ministries, commended the Mayor and Council for the forum and the efforts being made and noted the involvement of the religious community.

Father Powderly of St. Mary's Church in Rockville stated that too often the seriousness of alcohol abuse is missed and that it is a gateway problem.

Bill Skinner, Chairman of the Drug Use Advisory Council, noted the need for halfway houses for mentally handicapped, and asked the Mayor and Council about action to amend the zoning requirements. Mayor Duncan noted that they are looking into inclusionary zoning for that type of housing.

Re: Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council in Worksession, the meeting was adjourned at 10:28 p.m., to convene again in General Session on May 8, 1989, at 7:30 p.m., or at the call of the Mayor.